

VOL. XXV.

AUGUSTA, MAINE, THURSDAY MORNING, JANUARY 15, 1857.

NO. 4.



Our Home, our Country, and our Brother Man

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

Whether the present session of Congress will be marked by any further action on Mr. Holoway's bill, reported last session, establishing a Department of Agriculture, is very doubtful. It will probably be allowed to die, without any one taking the trouble to sustain its life, or give it further form or activity.

Why do not the farmers of the Union take hold of this matter themselves, and speak to Congress in such way and manner as will make them listen, and, hearing, obey? Until they do arise in their strength, and demand this thing, we fear Congress will do nothing of the kind. At present, what is done for agriculture is done by way of appendage to the Patent Office, and this much has been established by constant teasing and worrying of Congress.

Important as this arrangement is,—a mere subordinate, as it were, to other departments,—we look upon it as a source of a vast deal of good to the community. Its reports, and the seeds which it scatters throughout the Union, are doing a vast amount of good, and are productive of practical benefit to those who receive them. If, then, a department thus subordinate, thus hampered, and thus feeble in regard to its own intrinsic strength, is able to do so much good, how much more beneficial it would be, if placed upon a permanent foundation, with funds and power to act of itself without reference to the wants and biddings of other departments.

We trust the day is coming, and that not far distant, when the Department of Agriculture will be, like the other Departments, a co-equal branch of our general government.

SAFE OLD FELLOWS.

The Editor of the American Farmer observed, while crossing a field of wheat, that although the soil was fertile and well adapted to the crop, the sorrel was as abundant as the grain, and that the latter had a hard contest with the sorrel to hold its own and mature seed. He says this field belongs to what a friend of his styled "a safe old fellow," and he goes on and describes one.

Young "safe old fellows" don't believe in agricultural papers and book farming. It is so with this farmer,—a prudent, hard working, pain-taking man,—a man who meets his obligations, for he has few to meet—a safe man—very—for never made a venture. Catch one of your safe men spending a dollar, unless he sees six per cent. at the end of the year in black and white. He goes on ahead, because it is safer to stand still. He won't think, because he has seen people get themselves into trouble by thinking. He won't read—too many theories. He goes in for fact, and practice is all practice to him. He doesn't perceive that there is any difference between good and bad. When he succeeds it is all good management, if he fails, it is good management still; but what can a man do with such wretched weather? therefore he is practical to the end of the chapter. What he makes is the work of his own hands,—what he does not make, Providence forbids. Why should he not be satisfied? Let him rest and rust. If he does not walk, he will never be thrown off. If he will not ride on a railroad, he will not be engaged in "a smash up." Our "safe" friend is astonished that people who know these facts will walk, ride horses, or travel on railroads, yet a great many people do these things with apparent advantage to themselves.

For the Maine Farmer.

BETHEL FARMERS' CLUB.

The Annual Meeting of the Club was held Dec. 2d, at the house of Dr. N. T. True. The officers for the ensuing year were chosen, viz:—

Josiah Brown, President.

Isaac C. Cross, Vice President.

A. L. Burbank, Secretary.

N. T. True, Librarian.

Zenas Thompson.

Gilmal Chapman, Committee on Subjects, N. T. True.

The subject for discussion was on the Cultivation of the Potato. A prominent feature of the discussion was to discard all theories and deal with facts.

Rev. Mr. Thompson introduced the subject by alluding to the question, so often discussed, whether large or small potatoes were best for seed. He stated what he regarded as a fact, that during the process of decay, the potato itself would afford nourishment to the growing plant, but there was a limit to this. Other conditions are necessary for the full development of the plant. He thought that a very large potato would have a tendency to produce many small ones.

Dr. True suggested, that like many other things, there may be opposite extreme prejudices to the cultivation of the potato. He thought that a medium sized potato best for seed. He stated what he regarded as a fact, that during the process of decay, the potato itself would afford nourishment to the growing plant, but there was a limit to this. Other conditions are necessary for the full development of the plant. He thought that a very large potato would have a tendency to produce many small ones.

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President thought that potatoes might be made a profitable crop. Many farmers in this vicinity are turning their attention to plowing up their old pastures and obtaining good crops. It is a noteworthy fact, that upon an established race track the horses are seldom injured or abused. How is it with our farm horses and roadsters?—in our public conveyances how is it? But what are the specifications against the track? They

and spread on the furrow a good coating of coarse manure, and also dressed in the hill. He preferred harrowing in, rather than plowing in manure, and spring, rather than fall plowing for potatoes. Mr. Cross was listened to with much interest by all present.

Dr. True concurred with Mr. Cross in his views, judging from his own experience. For eight years past he has planted potatoes on nearly the same kind of soil, a strong upland. For six years he plowed in his manure and failed of a remunerating crop each year. For two past years he harrowed in his manure and has obtained a very handsome crop. The present year, he harrowed into the furrow a generous supply of coarse manure, then manured lightly in the hill, and applied a handful of plaster which had been saturated with sea water, and he had the best crop he had ever raised. Nor had the rot affected them scarcely at all. Doubts might be expressed in regard to this mode of cultivation with reference to the subsequent crops of grain and grass which should be taken into account.

The subject then naturally turned the subject of deep manuring and deep plowing.

Gilmal Chapman, Esq., quoted a recent article from the Massachusetts Ploughman, in which the writer stated that manure should not, ordinarily, be more than three inches below the surface. Sandy land, he thought, should receive a shallow plowing, but most of the intervals would admit of as deep plowing as the plow could be made to run. Plow deep, but not manure too deep, seemed to be the rule.

Jedediah Burbank, Esq., thought that plowing and manuring should correspond. If we wish to plow deep, we should manure heavily.

Mr. A. J. Burbank gave his experience, the past year, in the use of superphosphate of lime on corn. He used two parts of plaster, and one of the superphosphate, and succeeded finely, where he planted in the hill, but saw no effect from a top dressing.

After discussing the merits of the Dr. apples, the Ex-President, J. A. Twitchell, Esq., stated that although he had not been engaged in farming, the past year, he would show the company what he had done, if they would look over the Dr.'s new house.

The meeting was one of much interest, and was an earnest of what our semi-monthly meetings will be, through the winter. Our only regret is that more of the farmers in this vicinity do not feel an interest in the subjects discussed, and attend the meetings in much larger numbers. Aside from the information obtained and imparted, they prove to be among the pleasantest social gatherings which can be found.

N. T. T. Bethele, Dec. 2, 1856.

NOTE. The above communication was mislaid soon after received, which must be our apology for not publishing it sooner. Success to the Bethel Farmers' Club. We hope to receive regular reports of their meetings.

For the Maine Farmer.

AGRICULTURAL SHOWS AND FAIRS.

Mr. EDITOR.—The able written article in the 2d number of your present volume, by "Unity with Consistency," requires of us all something to every impartial man who has, with a desire for instruction, and for fun, too—spent so much time at such a dreadful place.

I have no arguments to offer in favor of the track as it is.

Mr. object, Mr. EDITOR, in offering you these remarks, is, as a brother farmer, to endorse most of the excellent article by "Unity," and to call a little thought to the intrinsic worth which I believe there is in an established track, under the control of the trustees of our agricultural societies, altogether beyond the reach of interested parties, as it would be, for any illegitimate purpose; and I do this, not so much for the track of itself, but for it as an important feature in the agricultural exhibition, and, in a pecuniary point of view, the indispensable part.

PRESUMPSOCOT.

For the Maine Farmer.

AGRICULTURAL SHOWS AND FAIRS.

Mr. EDITOR.—I have read your remarks in the Farmer of the 1st inst., and the communication of a correspondent upon "Agricultural Fairs," &c., with very great satisfaction. His ideas so entirely correspond with those which I had, when looking at the recent State Fair in Portland, that I queried whether there had not been, between the writer and myself. But having, for a long time, had little or no confidence in any such influences, whether they pass under the name of mesmerism, spirit rappings, or any other variety of folly, I concluded to view the communication with the greatest interest.

The remarks upon the present mode of awarding premiums by agricultural societies, must command themselves to the minds of all thoughtful men, who have the good cause of agriculture at heart.

That the producer is the one to be encouraged and rewarded, no one ought to gainsay; and it is the absolute duty of societies to prevent the mere consumers from appropriating this right.

Brother farmers, let us ponder upon the suggestions presented in the section treating of oxen hauling. Have we not been thoughtless here? Shall we not say to the trustees and managers of agricultural societies—Protect the ox from those hours of torture. Award your premiums to his most generally useful qualities. Let the perfected development of his muscles be incidentally exposed, as extra strength is occasionally needed in ploughing, rather than in straining against enormous dead weight, seldom necessary to the farm.

Again—adopting the next suggestion—if the comparative merits of horse trainers can be obtained, give them the favorable notice which would be so valuable. Still further—ought not the societies, in their distribution of books, to endeavor to diffuse through the producing community such works as convey sound, practical information upon this subject of training domestic animals, so often made a very mystery of?

But I must protest against the position lately taken by the few, so often discussed, whether large or small potatoes were best for seed.

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THE MAINE FARMER: AN AGRICULTURAL AND FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

LATEST NEWS FROM EUROPE.



ARRIVAL OF THE NORTH AMERICAN.

The steamship North American arrived at Portland on Thursday last, bringing dates from England to the 24th ult., four days later. The following summary comprises everything of interest:

THE CONGRESS OF PARIS. Contradictory statements respecting the Conference continue to abound. The principal statement is in letters from Vienna of the 14th, stating that Count Buol had received from Count Walewaki an official notification that France cannot accept the interpretation of the Belgrade and Isle of Sora-pes questions, in the absolute and determined English, French, and Turkish. Count Buol has made this unexpected announcement in all haste to the Emperor in Italy. Paris papers publish the text of the letter, under reserve.

The London Globe, the British government organ, denies that there is any difficulty in the way between France and England. The London Daily News believes the difficulty does exist, and will postpone its meeting of the Congress indefinitely.

The Paris Debats thinks that all hope of adjustment is lost, and the Compte Open thinks that Congress will open early in January, and be satisfactory.

PRUSSIA AND SWITZERLAND. Diplomatic relations are broken off between Prussia and Switzerland, and matters are becoming extremely complicated.

No reply had been received, up to the 16th, to the note of the 8th, addressed by Prussia to the Great Powers, on the affair of Neuchâtel. It was, however, supposed that Russia and France would support Prussia, and the Compte Open disapproves of an armed demonstration by Prussia. Meantime Prussia persists in forcible measures.

Prussia has notified the Germanic Diet that her own troops are sufficient for the exigency, and preparations are being made for the assembling of 35,000 men at Berlin by January 2, under command of Gen. von Grolsen, to march on Switzerland.

The Swiss are behaving with the greatest gallantry. Gen. Clark was chosen Assistant Clerk; George Humphrey, Messenger; Orrin Carter, Assistant Messenger.

Messages were sent to the Governor and Council, and House of Representatives, announcing the organization of the Senate.

An order was issued inviting the settled clergymen of Austria and Hungary to officiate as Chaplains, in rotation, at the Diet.

A message was received from the House, announcing the organization of that body.

The Secretary of State laid before the Senate the returns of voters for Senator and also for Governor, at the time of the election of the Senate.

President joined on the part of the Senate.

The Senate having returned, Mr. Jones, by letter, introduced a bill to repeat an act entitled, "An act in relation to the Supreme Judicial Court," approved April 18, 1832, on the table.

After the bill was read, a committee was appointed to contract for the State printing and binding was passed in concurrence and Messrs. Hallowell, Herrick, and Chandler joined on the part of the Senate.

President announced the following Standing Committee:

In the Senate, a Committee of the members of the Senate, at 11 o'clock A. M., Hon. Warren H. Vinton, of Gray, was chosen Chairman. A Committee to examine the credentials of members of the Senate.

Having been satisfied of the regularity of the members of the Senate, and the Senate adjourned.

A message was received from the House, announcing the organization of the House.

On the 20th, Capt. Hartstein, Lieuts. Wells, Jones, Hunter, Davison, Dr. May, and others, of the Royal Engineers, were appointed at the Admiralty, House, by Admiral Seymour, Commander-in-Chief. Mr. Crosby, U. S. Consul, and Chevalier Pappalardi, Vice Consul at Portsmouth, were also guests, with a circle of Naval officers. The American officers were afterwards presented to Lady Seymour and family. In the afternoon, the Agents of Lloyd's, at Portsmouth, delivered a telegraphic message to Capt. Hartstein, from the Ship-owner's Society of Liverpool, requesting him to make application from that society to present an address. A reply was returned that the deputation would be received on Tuesday next, on board the Resolute.

On Christmas day, the American officers will dine with Lady Franklin.

The Royal Diet is convoked for the 27th of December.

GREAT BRITAIN. The war with Persia is not at present popular. The London Times, usually government, and the London Press, Derby organ both denounce it. Many English, and several French papers, think it will cause another war between Britain and Russia alone.

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The Resolute was visited by some of the officers who went out in her and other ships of the Arctic search, and who were present at the Royal Naval Captain's and Lieutenant's Pym.

On Tuesday, 29th, a banquet was given to the American officers by the City of Plymouth, being the only public dinner that could attend.

The run on the National Bank of Ireland has subsided.

Baron Roebuck was arrested at Liverpool for having come passenger in the Persia without paying his passage.

There is decided difference of opinion on the Liverpool 'Change respecting the amount of the Cotton crop. Buyers say there is a large one, while holders maintain a contrary opinion.

Stuart's circular estimating 3,300,000 bales was posted over Persia in the Exchange, but speedily disappeared, supposed to have been abstracted by a holder.

It was reported on Change that government is among all the gunboats for active service, probably for the war.

The Gazette announces that the prohibition to export rice, barley, oats, meal and potatoes from Poland, has been removed.

FRANCE. Private letters from Paris are not of a discreditable character, although the Bourse shows continued weakness. The position of the Bank of France still improves, and it is expected that the restriction against the discount of bills having more than six days to maturity will be removed.

The rules and orders of the last House were adopted, until further order.

The work was ordered to invite the clergymen of August, Howell, and Gardner to officiate in rotation as Chaplains.

A communication was received from the Hon. Hannibal Hamlin, addressed to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, as follows:

LEGISLATIVE COMPEND.

WEDNESDAY, Jan. 7. The Senate, after assembling in the Senate Chamber at 10 o'clock A. M., Mr. Magoun, of Boston, was chosen Chairman. Having been duly noticed of their election, Mr. Wells, attended by the Executive Council, and the Heads of Departments, came in and administered the oath to the Senators elect.

Mr. Magoun, of Boston, was chosen Secretary of the Senate, receiving 29 out of 30 votes. He was qualified, and entered upon the duties of his office.

The Senate then proceeded to the election of President, Vice-President, and Clerk. Mr. W. accepted the office, and being conducted to the Chair, by Mr. Smith of Arroostock, addressed the Senate as follows:

CONVENTION.—I accept with due sensibility, I trust, the somewhat conspicuous position which I am now filling. Mr. Magoun of Lincoln, was charged with a message to the Governor elect, to inform him that the two branches were in convention, ready to administer to him the oath of office. The Governor elect, and to receive any communication he may be pleased to make. The Senate concurred.

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